

# THE AUSTRALIAN

## 7 THE NATION

THE AUSTRALIAN,  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2023  
[theaustralian.com.au](http://theaustralian.com.au)

## Out of the bush to fulfil a dream

ELLIE DUDLEY

“Every kid has the potential to do wonderful things but they need to have the stability to do so.”

Those are the words of Indigenous law student Injarra Harbour, who began a dream placement with HSBC last month.

The 19-year-old, raised in the remote town of Winton, in Queensland, wouldn't have believed his ears had you told him 10 years ago he would land an opportunity working at one of Australia's biggest banks.

But here he is, an intern in HSBC's global banking team, being mentored by chief executive Antony Shaw.

Such is the fruit of the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation tertiary placement scholarships. The organisation offers funding and support to more than 1000 Indigenous youth across Australia to help them achieve great opportunities.

Injarra says he had a “unique upbringing”, with his parents often having up to 13 people in his home.

“We were one of two openly Indigenous families in the whole town,” he said.

Injarra's extended family lived five hours away in Mount Isa – one of the “hubs” where the most “disfranchised” Indigenous Australians gather, he says.

“I got to see how these things



were affecting my family, and it's like anything else, when you're in the cycle you don't know you're in it until you step out,” he said.

And step out he has. Injarra was a recipient of the AIEF boarding school scholarship, which secured him a spot at St Joseph's Nudgee College, in Brisbane. He completed year 12 in 2020 and recently began his HSBC placement.

Asked about the reasons behind his success, Injarra says: “Stability is the main thing. Having an unstable household, an unstable childhood, that can really put you at a disadvantage. But what the AIEF scholarship does is that it stabilises the out-of-school experience as much as possible.”

He is just one of the bright students for whom the AIEF is providing greater opportunities. Another is Traeden Sialeipata, a sports management student who undertook his second placement with the bank last month.

The 21-year-old is working with HSBC's brand partnerships team to support the Sydney Sevens rugby. “The contacts I've built and the opportunities I've been given have been immeasurable,” he said.



Injarra Harbour and Traeden Sialeipata, who have internships at banking giant HSBC

JOHN FEDER